

# The Trouble with Humpadori (a surprise review)

Consider obtaining the following material before beginning: a shaligram, “a totemic dark stone or cosmic spheroid” which represents the shapes of Aggarwal’s character Humpadori, an enigmatic, genderless, gender-all, shape-shifter. It might be a good idea to practice with a physical shaligram before proceeding with this book. There are many shaligrams present in its pages. When you come across one, copy it onto the roof of your mouth with your tongue. Do this every time. Do not attempt to detach your mind from your body when engaging with *Humpadori*.

Note: When you hold *The Trouble with Humpadori* in your hands, understand it is not only a book, but also an *ouroboros gizmo*, a piece of technology possibly crafted by *Cyborg Kali* (Vidhu Aggarwal), constantly beginning and ending, devouring global pop culture and colonialist history while simultaneously spitting it out into frothy post-colonialist poetics.

Note: If you are lonely, summon the friends of the ever-shifting Hump: Echo Friend, Soap Friend, Sphinx Friend, Umbilical Cord Friend, Unicorn Friend, Zeitgeist Friend, Phone-a-Friend and others. Each of these friends offer a distinct voice, “If you pluck/ the grub-end, you might bleed/ horizons, / a free-form history, but never free.” Umbilical Cord Friend summarizes the nature of Humpadori, endless in shape and transformative deformity but also bound to remix what has already occurred. Remember, you aren’t being introduced to these friends; you’re being made aware of their unending cosmic presence: “we sprawl, we metastasize, we s(t)ink into the sea.”

Note: *Cosmic pixel dream girls*, unite!

Note: Push play on *The Trouble with Humpadori* and you might be surprised at what plays back, to progress through this book is to conjure the past in playback. “Yes, we’re on/ the downlow, / on the attack, moving the lips/ of your parallel histories,” Aggarwal extracts these words from the cosmos: inviting, biting, and from multiple voices and identities. The bursting consciousness of an imperialistic world is tethered to formats like minstrel show interviews, love letters, and soundtracks, so that we, just for a glimmering, mind-altering moment, can witness these parallel histories at once.

Read this book, this *ouroboros gizmo*, and be melted into a gender queer, post-colonial spectacle. *The Trouble with Humpadori* recycles our abject trash and makes an (almost) brand new disco ball. So what are you waiting for? You have your shaligram, right? Let’s boogie...

(Italicized text and quotes from *The Trouble with Humpadori*.)